

page 2 - Dr. Nordsiek

the causal role of smoking, but it would make it more probable.

Regarding the proposed budget, I find no evident defects, but I would disclaim any expertise in this aspect of research planning.

Sincerely yours,

*Gordon Allen*

Gordon Allen, M.D.  
Laboratory of Socio-environmental  
Studies, NIMH

cc. Drs. Gardner  
Huebner  
Sommer  
Hockett

(also Mar. '73 agenda book)

1003538749



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
HEALTH SERVICES AND MENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

January 24, 1973

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH  
MENTAL HEALTH INTRAMURAL  
RESEARCH PROGRAM  
9000 ROCKVILLE PIKE  
BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20014  
AREA CODE 301 TEL: 656-4000

Frederic W. Nordsiek, Ph.D.  
Council for Tobacco Research - U.S.A., Inc.  
110 E. 59th Street - 10th Floor  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Dr. Nordsiek:

I find this research proposal methodologically sophisticated but conceptually naive. The latter finding admittedly reflects my own prejudices about the inheritance of complicated behavior and about the pitfalls of twin studies. My reservations are based also on the impression that Professor Eysenck will, as he has sometimes done in the past, be so bent on reaching a firm conclusion from his study that his interpretation of results may go far beyond what I would consider justifiable.

Despite these reservations, I am inclined to recommend approval of the research grant. First, Professor Eysenck has a very thorough grasp of methods of psychological testing and of statistical analysis, and his consultant in genetics, L. J. Eaves, has made important contributions to the statistical analysis of twin data. Consequently, the proposed study is almost certain to yield some excellent new data on "twin heritability" of psychological variables.

Second, the research is a logical, if not a necessary, inquiry into the meaning of the now securely established association between smoking and certain diseases. As long as that association lacks a complete causal explanation, it can be attributed to some antecedent variable, either genetic or environmental, that is independently responsible for the smoking habit and associated diseases. Other studies are examining the causes of disease; this study will expose the link, if any, between heredity and the smoking habit.

At this point the deficiencies of the twin method will be limiting, because even if the smoking habit can be tied to psychological traits, these traits will not be conclusively assignable to either heredity or the early childhood environment. For the present purposes, however, that is not important. If the results should be negative, they could effectively exclude heredity as an explanation of the association between smoking and disease. That would not establish

1003538748